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PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights recommended that the General Assembly proclaim an international decade of the world's indigenous people, to begin in 1994, including action-oriented programmes, to be decided upon in partnership with indigenous people. At the same time, it recommended that a voluntary trust fund should be set up and that the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system should be considered (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III).

2. The International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/163 of 21 December 1993, to begin on 10 December 1994. In its resolution 49/214, the Assembly adopted the short-term programme of Decade activities for 1995; in its resolution 50/157, the Assembly adopted the proposed programme of activities for the Decade, giving special emphasis to the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education; finally, in its resolution 51/78, the Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People".

3. One of the main objectives of the Decade is the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people, currently under discussion in the Working Group set up by the Commission on Human Rights. Another objective is the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system to serve as a permanent arena in which indigenous people could discuss questions of interest to them with Governments and help to promote peace and prosperity, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

4. A further objective of the Decade is education as a major means of solving the problems facing indigenous people, together with the promotion and protection of the human and historical rights of those people.

5. The United Nations has carried out a series of activities relating to the rights of indigenous people. They include a study on treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous peoples and one on the protection of the heritage of indigenous peoples. The question of the environment and indigenous peoples, in the light of its importance, was discussed at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on Agenda 21 in June 1997.

6. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights attaches special importance to international cooperation for the solution of the problems facing indigenous peoples. One of its priorities is to promote and ensure an ongoing dialogue between Governments and indigenous peoples so as to facilitate the technical assistance needed to strengthen indigenous organizations and enable them to find and implement solutions to their own problems.

A. Commission on Human Rights

7. At its fifty-third session, the Commission on Human Rights considered for the second time the agenda item entitled "Indigenous issues", in accordance with its decision 1996/102, and adopted six major resolutions concerning indigenous peoples.[1]

8. In the context of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Commission recommended that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should organize a workshop for research and higher education institutions focusing on indigenous issues and education, to improve the exchange of information and encouraging future cooperation between such institutions in consultation with indigenous people and in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other relevant United Nations bodies (resolution 1997/32).

B. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

9. On 22 August 1997, at its forty-ninth session (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/L.11), the Subcommission considered the item on the human rights of indigenous peoples and recommended (resolution 1997/14) that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations should cooperate as a body of experts in any conceptual clarifications or analysis which might assist the working group established by the Commission on Human Rights in its work on the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. It also recommended that the Working Group should continue to address indigenous health and other important questions such as indigenous education and language, land rights and nutrition at future sessions.

10. The Subcommission requested the Secretary-General to invite Governments, intergovernmental organizations and indigenous and non-governmental organizations to provide information and data on matters relating to "Indigenous peoples: education and language", as well as health and land rights, to be made available as background papers at the Working Group's sixteenth session.

11. The Subcommission considered the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (resolution 1997/15) and recommended the earliest possible adoption, within the framework of the Decade, of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people. It also urged the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to accelerate the relevant procedure so that the international workshop of indigenous journalists could take place early in 1998, and it thanked the Government of Spain for offering to host the workshop.

12. It also recommended that the Coordinator for the Decade should consider holding a special fund-raising meeting with interested permanent missions and the members of the Advisory Group to encourage contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Decade and the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations.

13. The Subcommission welcomed the recommendation made by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1997/32 that the High Commissioner for Human

Rights should convene a workshop in the spring of 1998 for research and higher education institutions focusing on indigenous issues and human rights.

14. In connection with the possible establishment of a permanent forum within the United Nations system for indigenous peoples, the Subcommission, in its resolution 1997/10, recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should decide to request the Working Group on Indigenous Populations to focus on the questions of membership and participation in and the mandate of, the permanent forum, with a view to the early establishment of such a forum within the present structure of the United Nations system, preferably under the Economic and Social Council.

15. Regarding the protection of the heritage of indigenous peoples, the Subcommission, in its resolution 1997/13, recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should adopt a draft decision recommending that the High Commissioner for Human Rights should organize a seminar on the draft principles and guidelines for the protection of the heritage of indigenous peoples (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/31), with the participation of the Special Rapporteur and representatives of Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations, specialized agencies, organizations of indigenous peoples and competent indigenous persons.

16. In connection with a study on indigenous land rights, in its resolution 1997/12 the Subcommission recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should adopt a draft decision requesting the Secretary-General to provide the Special Rapporteur with the assistance necessary to enable her to complete her final working paper in accordance with Commission on Human Rights decision 1997/114 of 11 April 1997. Regarding the study on treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous populations (decision 1997/113), the Subcommission urged the Special Rapporteur to submit his final report, preferably by the end of 1997, so that it could be considered by the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at its sixteenth session and by the Subcommission at its fiftieth session.

C. Working Group on Indigenous Populations

17. The purpose of the meetings of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations is to review developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous populations and to develop new standards in that regard. Its most notable achievements include preparation of the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, support for the observance of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, the establishment of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples.

18. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations, at its fifteenth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/14), from 28 July to 1 August 1997 which attracted 887 participants, considered the evolution of standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples. It also considered the sub-item on the "concept of indigenous peoples". The Working Group took note of the general consensus among participants that it was not yet possible to arrive at a universal definition.

19. The Working Group also considered a sub-item on "health and indigenous peoples" and decided to keep the issue of health on the agenda of its next session. It agreed to include a review of the question of indigenous populations and education and language and the item "Study of indigenous peoples and their relationship to the land" on the agenda of its sixteenth session. In connection with the permanent forum, the Working Group decided that it would focus, at its sixteenth session, on the questions of membership and participation in, and the mandate of, the possible forum.

20. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to the Advisory Group to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade for the work which it had done, its initiatives and the transparency of its methods of work. It invited the members of the Advisory Group and Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations to do everything possible to attend the meetings to which they had been invited.

II. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN 1997

21. In its resolution 50/157, the General Assembly adopted the Programme of Activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Among its objectives, importance was attached to the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education.

22. Emphasis was given to education as being of vital importance in the solution of the problems facing indigenous peoples, together with the need to promote and protect the human rights of those peoples.

A. Activities of the major actors

23. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 48/163, 49/214, 50/157 and 51/78 concerning the Decade, recommended that the United Nations system, Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested parties should contribute to the activities and objectives of the Decade, in cooperation with indigenous people.

24. Observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People. Ceremonies marking the International Day of the World's Indigenous People were held for the third time on 9 August 1997 at United Nations Headquarters and at the United Nations Office at Geneva at a meeting of the Subcommission attended by representatives of indigenous people, Governments and non-governmental organizations. Relevant aspects of human rights were examined, with attention focused on the right of indigenous people to land.

25. In his message, the Secretary-General said that, on the occasion of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, indigenous people should be taken into account in the United Nations reform process, in that, as the first advocates of sustainable development, they were considered as the guardians of

nature and that, with their experience and wisdom, it would be possible to find solutions to those problems in the next century.

26. Official observance of the Decade at international conferences. At the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on Agenda 21, it was stated that forests were an integral part of sustainable development and essential to many indigenous peoples (resolution S-19/2).

B. Activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Coordinator of the Decade

27. Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The Fund was set up pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/163 and 49/214, with the purpose of financing projects and programmes during the Decade and strengthening international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people; in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/157, an Advisory Group was established for the Voluntary Fund, which held its first meeting in April 1996. At its second meeting, in April 1997, the Group recommended that the High Commissioner for Human Rights should implement the fellowship programme, subsidize a number of projects and support the Office of the High Commissioner's own activities for indigenous people.

28. In the past year, the Voluntary Fund has received contributions from the following Governments: Canada, 10,799; Denmark, 168,186; Fiji, 3,000; Greece, 3,000; Japan, 50,000; and Sweden, 61,633. Appreciation is expressed to those Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals that have contributed to the Fund. It is important to increase contributions to enable more activities to be carried out in partnership with indigenous people.

29. Fellowship programme for indigenous people in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. This is a six-month (July to December 1997) programme in Geneva which includes training and practical work on human rights and on the United Nations system. The pilot programme began on 1 July 1997.

30. At its second meeting, the Advisory Group to the Fund considered a total of 107 applications for the fellowship programme from 33 countries and agreed to recommend to the High Commissioner fellowship applicants for 1997 from the following indigenous organizations: Ain Association, Sapporo, Japan; "Yasvey" Nantsy Population Association, Russian Federation; Conselho de Articulaçao dos Povos e Organizaçoes Indígenas do Brasil, Brazil; and the Indian Confederation of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, India.

31. Projects of indigenous organizations. At its second meeting, the Advisory Group to the Fund considered a total of 65 projects from 32 countries and noted that the information submitted for them was in keeping with the guidelines for applications to the Fund.

32. In view of the limited resources available, the Advisory Group agreed to recommend subsidizing the following projects and organizations: (a) MAA Development Association: Capacity-building for MAA Development Association, Kenya, Africa; (b) Four Directions Council: Global Communications network for

indigenous peoples, Canada; (c) Laya Adivasis Samvaad: Continuing a process of dialogue on displacement and identity of indigenous people's rights in the Indian context, India; (d) International Indian Treaty Council: Providing training, technical assistance and educational services towards the empowerment and development of a well-prepared team of Indian representatives to participate in international work, forum and policy development, United States of America; (e) Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA): A radio programme on indigenous peoples, Philippines; (f) Centros Culturales Mapuche de Cañete Asociación Gremial: Defending indigenous lands of the four Mapuche-Pehuenche communities in the Eighth region, Chile; (g) Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council: Youth Intern Project of the Sioux nation, United States of America; (h) L'Auravetl'an Foundation: Indigenous Information Centre in Moscow, Russian Federation; (i) Consejo de Renacimiento de la Sabiduría del Pueblo Maya: Strengthening the knowledge of the use of natural medicine, Guatemala; and (j) Women's Council Aboriginal Corporation: Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Law and Culture Meeting, Australia.

33. Second workshop on the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people. In accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/30, the second workshop on the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples in the United Nations system was held in Santiago, Chile, from 30 June to 2 July 1997. In accordance with the resolution, the High Commissioner for Human Rights invited representatives of Governments, indigenous organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations bodies, organizations and specialized agencies to participate in the workshop.

34. The following States took part: Argentina, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark (Autonomous Government of Greenland), Finland, Guatemala, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United States of America and Uruguay.

35. Nine United Nations bodies, organizations and specialized agencies were represented and 30 indigenous organizations from the following countries attended: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Norway, Peru, Philippines and United States of America. The following three non-governmental organizations were represented: World Council of Churches, International Federation of Human Rights and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

36. The workshop considered the main questions relating to the establishment of the permanent forum, namely, mandate, functions, possible activities, participation of indigenous people, the United Nations body to which the forum would report, financing and secretariat matters.

37. The workshop noted with appreciation the progress made both at the Copenhagen workshop and at the current meeting in Santiago. Participants agreed that the report should be transmitted to Governments, the United Nations system and indigenous organizations, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1997/30. Participants invited all interested parties to promote the process of establishing a permanent forum. They also made observations on the

report, together with specific proposals for the consideration of the question at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

C. Operational activities of the United Nations system

38. General Assembly resolution 50/157 invited the organizations of the United Nations system to give increased priority and resources to improving the conditions of indigenous people by, inter alia, the preparation of specific programmes, the launching of special projects in collaboration with indigenous people and the designation of focal points for coordination with the Centre for Human Rights of activities related to the Decade.

39. Inter-agency meeting on indigenous people. The International Labour Organization (ILO) held a meeting on 25 July 1997 to consult with United Nations organizations about the work being done in relation to indigenous peoples.

40. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights reported on its activities concerning indigenous people. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations and the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People provided financial support for participation in working groups on indigenous people and in programmes and projects of indigenous organizations. The fellowship programme for indigenous people offered training to members of indigenous and tribal communities in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and ILO. The Programme was launched in July 1997 with four interns, from Brazil, India, Japan and the Russian Federation.

41. Preparations were under way for a draft manual for indigenous and tribal people on the United Nations system and an international workshop for indigenous journalists, to be held in January 1998 in Madrid. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations held its session from 28 July to 1 August 1997, together with an informal meeting to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the first international conference on indigenous matters held by the Committee on Non-governmental Organizations at the Palais des Nations in Geneva in 1977. The Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples would meet from 27 October to 7 November 1997.

42. UNESCO was still developing a project in Guatemala, entitled "Mundo Maya" (Mayan World), in the areas of education, science and human rights, with a focus on cultural integrity and biological diversity.

43. To commemorate the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Assembly of WHO adopted resolutions WHA47.27, 48.24, 49.26 and 50.31, encouraging member States to develop health programmes for indigenous people, taking into account the need for active participation at the local level. The resolutions called on the Director-General of WHO to continue to facilitate the work of the focal point for the Decade.

44. Information existed on a substance-abuse programme organized and directed by a team of indigenous persons, using common principles of "indigenous to

indigenous' contacts; agreement had been reached that the programme should be based on enabling indigenous people to meet and discuss issues of common interest relating to health and substance abuse, and recognizing the value of indigenous methods of learning in which the people themselves found their own solutions.

45. In the view of ILO, it was important for the various agencies to share their experiences on how to incorporate the needs and concerns of indigenous and tribal people into their operational activities and supervisory functions. Consultation and participation were two of the fundamental concepts. However, the structures of intergovernmental organizations did not encourage the involvement of indigenous and tribal peoples in their activities.

46. The capacity of indigenous and tribal people to participate in the activities of international organizations was also limited by the lack of resources, training and time, and restrictions of other types.

47. The World Bank reported on the continued process of review of operational directive 4.20 on activities in relation to indigenous peoples. The Bank was implementing a project on the compilation of laws concerning cultural property in China and Pakistan, which could usefully be expanded to include such countries as Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, India and the Philippines. The impact of the World Bank fund for indigenous peoples' projects and the increase in community development projects were also discussed.

48. The World Bank also described the problems it had encountered in seeking to hold consultations and ensure the participation of indigenous and tribal people in its operational activities, since most indigenous communities lived in remote areas and spoke no other languages but their native tongues. On the basis of its experience in Latin America, the World Bank had realized the importance of establishing a strategy based on prior consultations before undertaking any kind of work in indigenous zones. It was necessary to identify the chief interested parties, since the needs in terms of basic services of the different communities varied depending on whether they were looked at from the regional or the national perspective. It was important to keep in mind that it could not be assumed that one indigenous community or organization spoke for all the others. The issue of representation was therefore a problem in some cases, as was the lack of knowledge of indigenous languages.

49. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity reported on decision III/14 of the Conference of the Parties, on the implementation of Convention article 8 (j). The debate on article 8 (j) in relation to indigenous communities was introduced for the first time at the third session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Buenos Aires in November 1996; the Conference adopted a resolution establishing an intersessional meeting that would focus on the inclusion of article 8 (j) in the Convention on Biological Diversity in relation to indigenous people. The intersessional meeting would be held in Madrid in November 1997.

D. Activities of regional organizations

50. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS) has completed the preparation of a draft inter-American declaration on the rights of indigenous people. On 5 June 1997, the General Assembly of OAS adopted resolution AG/RES.1479, which instructs the Permanent Council to study the proposed declaration.

51. In the same resolution, the General Assembly of OAS requests Governments to transmit their observations and recommendations no later than 31 December 1997. They would then be reviewed by the Inter-American Juridical Committee and the Inter-American Indian Institute. Lastly, the resolution instructs the Permanent Council to convene a meeting of government experts in the field, with a view to the possible adoption of the proposed declaration at the twenty-eighth session of OAS, to be held in June 1998.

E. Activities of Member States

52. The Government of Bolivia reports having carried out two important activities with indigenous people in connection with the Decade, namely, the First Course on Indigenous Law, held in Sucre from 31 March to 2 April 1997, and the International Seminar on the Administration of Justice and Indigenous People, held in Sucre from 2 to 4 April 1997. Those activities were supported by the Voluntary Fund for the Decade.

53. The Government of Canada has begun to hold consultations with local aboriginal leaders on the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, in order to open effective negotiations on the text and cooperate as fully as possible with the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights at its next session, to be held in October 1997. In addition, it notes the importance of ensuring that the specialized agencies, specifically ILO, participate in the process, since the draft declaration on indigenous rights covers both socio-economic and political issues. Canada also stresses that an official text does not yet exist.

54. The Governments of Colombia and Denmark jointly sponsored an inter-sessional meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, held in December 1996 in Leticia, in the Amazon region of Colombia, under the title 'International Meeting of Indigenous People and other Forest Inhabitants on the Administration, Conservation and Sustainable Development of Forests of all Types'. The meeting dealt mainly with traditional knowledge about forests, the use of national land, and programmes on forests, causes of desertification and international mechanisms and instruments.

55. The Government of Spain, through the Spanish Agency for International Development, has established a policy of cooperation with Ibero-American indigenous peoples. It is based on the concept of indigenous development from the perspective of Western society, indigenous organizations and Spain.

56. The main objective of the Spanish strategy is to support the sustainable self-development of indigenous people by encouraging their participation in

international forums as an active party in the formulation of their own strategies, development projects and skill-building, training and education programmes.

57. In view of the need for better promotion of the social and cultural rights of indigenous peoples, there must be support for their inclusion in the policies and programmes of the European Union and its member States, and in those of the developing countries.

F. Participation of indigenous communities in Decade-related activities

58. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Coordinator for the Decade regularly transmits General Assembly resolutions and other Decade-related documents to Governments, indigenous organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, accompanied by a note referring to specific points in the resolutions, such as the importance of forming local and national committees and strengthening the Voluntary Fund for the Decade. In response, Governments, indigenous organizations and non-governmental organizations have always become fully involved in major meetings on indigenous people, such as the Working Group on Indigenous Populations (see E/CN.4/1997/101).

59. Representatives of 106 of the world's indigenous organizations are duly accredited to participate in the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on indigenous rights, in accordance with Commission resolution 1995/32. The indigenous people of the world are actively involved in the activities of the Decade.

G. Activities of non-governmental organizations and other interested parties

60. Indigenous Parliament of America. At its twelfth meeting[2], held from 10 to 12 April 1997 in Guatemala City and attended by indigenous representatives from Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Paraguay, agreement was reached to support the relevant steps to ensure that ILO Convention 169 was ratified by the countries that had not yet done so; the meeting also urged Governments and indigenous representatives of the Americas to redirect and unify their efforts to meet the objectives of the national committees for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

61. European Parliament Intergroup for Indigenous People. At its meeting of 25 July 1997, in consultation with United Nations agencies about the work in progress in relation to indigenous and tribal people, the representative of the Intergroup for Indigenous People reported on the important decision taken by the development ministries of the Council of Europe on 5 June 1997[3]. They had requested the European Commission (executive body of the European Union) to prepare a policy statement on support for and collaboration with indigenous peoples. It was the first time in the history of the European Union that the Commission and the Council had expressed the desire to consider a coherent

policy on indigenous peoples in developing countries. The initiative had been proposed by the Governments of Denmark and Spain.

62. The UNESCO Institute of Education has reported on UNESCO initiatives in the field of adult education, including a draft declaration on adult education for indigenous people which includes a section on land. It has also reported on indigenous participation at the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education and Indigenous People, held in Hamburg, Germany, from 14 to 19 July 1997.

63. In the past two years, the World Council of Churches has been conducting a programme on indigenous people by holding a series of meetings and seminars throughout the world, with a focus on strengthening and promoting the participation of indigenous people in international forums, particularly in meetings of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. In 1997, the Council has awarded 20 fellowships to indigenous representatives to attend the session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in July 1997.

III. FINAL OBSERVATIONS

64. The objectives proposed in the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People cover a wide range of actions needed to solve the many problems faced by indigenous populations. Although progress has been made in the past year, much remains to be done. The actors taking part in the Decade are urged to redouble their efforts to achieve those objectives.

65. International cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education requires the establishment of machinery to coordinate the activities of Governments, regional organizations, associations of indigenous people, governmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested parties.

66. The resources received by the Voluntary Fund for the Decade so far are insufficient to cover its needs. Governments, governmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions and other bodies are therefore urged to contribute to the Fund.

67. It is recommended that the fellowship programme in the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other United Nations specialized agencies should be strengthened, so as to train indigenous representatives who wish to gain experience on matters relating to indigenous people.

68. It is a welcome development that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is planning to hold an international workshop for indigenous journalists in early 1998 in Madrid, thanks to the offer of the Government of Spain to host the meeting, and that a seminar will be held in the spring of 1998

for institutions of research and higher education on topics relating to indigenous people.

69. It is suggested that all high-level international conferences should make more room for discussion of matters relating to the objectives of the Decade and for the participation of indigenous people.

70. Mechanisms should continue to be developed in the United Nations to give nominal representation to indigenous organizations and people and provide an opportunity for experts and consultants to become involved in decision-making in the quest for solutions to the problems of indigenous people.

Notes

[1] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 3 (E/1997/23), chap. II.

[2] Indigenous Parliament of America, twelfth meeting.

[3] European Parliament, report of the Intergroup for Indigenous People, July 1996-July 1997.